



Physical Activity Questionnaire

Now I would like to know about your physical activity during a **typical week**. But first, let me ask you about your work and sleep habits.

1. On average, how many days do you work? _____ workdays
2. On average, how many hours do you sleep during each worknight (worknight would be the night before you go to work. For instance Sunday → Thursday for a typical workweek.) Record to nearest quarter-hour. _____.____ hours/night
3. On average, how many hours do you sleep each night before your days off (that is ____ and ____ nights)? _____.____ hours/night

Now I am going to ask you about your physical activity during a typical week; that is, your workdays and days off in a typical week. We are not going to talk about light activities, such as slow walking, light housework, or nonstrenuous sports such as bowling, archery, or softball. Please look at this Activity List, which shows some examples of what we consider moderate, hard, and very hard activities. (Interviewer: Hand subject list and allow time for the subject to read it over.) People engage in many other types of activities, and if you are not sure where one of your activities fits, please ask me about it.

4. First, let's consider moderate activities. During your workdays in a typical week, what activities do you do and how many total hours do you spend doing these moderate activities or others like them? Please tell me to the nearest half-hour. _____.____ hours/week
5. During your days off in a typical week, how many total hours do you spend on moderate activities and what do you do? Please tell me to the nearest half hour. (Probe: Can you think of any other sport, job, or household activities that would fit into this category?) _____.____ hours/week

6. Now let's look at hard activities. During your workdays in a typical week, what activities do you do and how many total hours do you spend doing these hard activities or others like them? Please tell me to the nearest half-hour. __ __. __ hours/week
7. During your days off, how many total hours do you spend on hard activities and what do you do? Please tell me to the nearest half-hour. (Probe: Can you think of any other sport, job, or household activities that would fit into this category?) __ __. __ hours/week
8. Now let's look at very hard activities. During your workdays in a typical week, what activities do you do and how many total hours do you spend doing these very hard activities or others like them? Please tell me to the nearest half-hour. __ __. __ hours/week
9. During your days off, how many total hours do you spend on very hard activities and what do you do? Please tell me to the nearest half-hour. (Probe: Can you think of any other sport, job or household activities that would fit into this category?) __ __. __ hours/week

Now I would like to ask you some questions about your activities in the **past month**.

10. For the past month, about how often have you taken part in moderate physical activity (such as golf, light sports or physical exercise, gardening, taking long walks)?
- More than 4 times a week ☐ 1
 2-4 times a week ☐ 2
 About once a week ☐ 3
 2-3 times over the month ☐ 4
 Rarely or never ☐ 5
11. For the past month, about how often have you taken part in hard or very hard physical activity (such as jogging, running, swimming, aerobics, strenuous sports)?
- More than 4 times a week ☐ 1
 2-4 times a week ☐ 2
 About once a week ☐ 3
 2-3 times over the month ☐ 4
 Rarely or never ☐ 5
12. How does the amount of activity you have done for the past month compare with your usual physical activity level?
- More active ☐ 1
 Less active ☐ 2
 About the same ☐ 3

Reviewed by (staff ID): _____ Entered by (staff ID): _____

Administration and Coding Instructions for the Physical Activity Questionnaire

Interviewing Technique

Your technique should limit bias, and you should try to keep the interview from becoming tedious. It may be difficult for participants to remember their past week's activity. Some may not try very hard, and others may get bogged down in details. You should strive to achieve a happy medium. You should control the pace of the interview; extraneous talk should be avoided. If participants are going into excessive detail, you should remind them that they need not account for every minute but that an average or estimate is expected. You might ask, "How much time in general?"

It is important to remember that most of the participants you see will spend the vast majority of their waking hours in light activity. Many tiring and unpleasant household or occupational tasks do not have a very high energy cost. Clerks in a store, for example, may be on their feet all day and may feel fatigued, but the energy cost is in the light category. An exception to this example would be time spent in stocking shelves, which probably would be moderate activity. Also, for most occupational tasks that require at least moderate energy expenditure, it is important to accurately determine the time spent in the activity. In the stock clerking example, even though a person might do that activity for an entire shift, it probably would not equal 8 hours. You should try to subtract time spent on lunch, breaks, and the like.

Interviewing Suggestions

You will be handing people lists of moderate, hard, and very hard activities (Activity List). We have found it easier to give them all three lists to look at once, before we ask them any questions about their activity level in the past 7 days.

Explain the following things before you hand them the list of activities (otherwise, they may not attend to what you are saying because they'll be too busy looking at the list:)

1. They are to think of the past 7 days. Stress that this is a recall of actual activities for the past week, not a history of what they usually do.
2. Workdays and days off will be treated separately. You may even help them figure out which days to include. For example, Monday through Thursday this week and Friday of last week might comprise the past 5 workdays. The

exception to this is for homemakers, retired persons and people not working. Their activities will probably be the same across the week. Questions 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8 should be coded "0" because these questions refer to work days.

3. Workdays include evenings as well.
4. We are not considering light activities, such as desk work, standing, slow walking, light housework, softball, archery, bowling, and the like.
5. They should also consider types of activities that are not included on the lists but are similar in strenuousness.

Mention the following things before you ask them questions about their activity level:

1. You will ask them questions about each category of activities separately (because people tend to give stream-of-consciousness reports of their week).
2. You may ask them if the amount of activity they report is more, less or about the same as usual (because people tend to be defensive, exaggerate the numbers, or offer rationales for low activity levels). This may enable the participants to give more accurate estimates of their activity level. However record the actual amount, not the usual amount.

While they are reporting the frequency with which they engage in various activities, be aware of the following:

1. Don't let them sidetrack you.
2. You may wish to ask them about their days off first. This enables them to practice giving you the information you need in a smaller block of time.
3. Check if the amount of time they are reporting is per weekend, per week, or per day. Someone may say, for example, "I did one hour of digging this past weekend," when what is really meant is, "I did one hour of digging each of the two days this past weekend." Except for questions 2 and 3, the remaining questions refer to total hours, not hours per day.
4. Some people have trouble recalling or pinpointing the moderate to very hard activities they have engaged in, in the past 7 days. In such cases, try to cue them by asking, for example, "how about any housework that made you work up a sweat; do you take stairs at work; do you walk briskly to work; did you participate in any sports, any vigorous family activities; did you do any vigorous home repair or gardening?"
5. Some people have trouble quantifying the amount of time they spent doing moderate, hard, or very hard activities. In such cases, break down all of their activities into specific events and ask them how long they did each activity. Then sum up the amount of time relevant to each category. Finally, ask them if they agree with your calculations.

6. If you are unsure of the strenuousness of an activity that they may have participated in, ask them to describe the physical effort involved - for example, what does the activity entail, what other activity is it comparable to, do they work up a sweat? We have found that walking and running provide good frames of reference for classifying other activities. Everyone should be familiar with the relative intensity of brisk walking, which is at about the midpoint of the moderate activity category. Therefore, if some other activity subjectively seems to be about as strenuous to the individual as walking briskly, then the activity should be coded as moderate. Running at any speed falls into the very hard category. If some activity seems about as strenuous to the individual as running, classify the activity as very hard. If the activity in question seems harder than walking but not as strenuous as running, place it in the hard category. Be careful to be certain that the activity in questions is performed continuously for at least 5 minutes. Some activities may be quite strenuous, but if they are performed intermittently, the overall energy cost may place them in the moderate category. A good example of this is weight lifting.
7. If the last week was totally atypical - for example, in the hospital or in bed, or involving a family crisis, a work crisis, or travel - it is permissible to go to the previous week for the survey. Do not take this action lightly, use it only in unusual circumstances.
8. Be sure that the time reported for an activity was actually spent doing the activity. Being at the pool for 2 hours but only swimming for 15 minutes, for example, should be recorded as 15 minutes, not 2 hours. Working in the garden all day Saturday (8 hours) should mean actually working for 8 hours. Do not count the time on breaks, rest periods, meals, and the like.
9. For most activities, the rate at which they are performed can make a huge difference in the energy cost. It is possible to play singles tennis, for example, so as not to move around very much and not spend much energy. The rate of digging, for another example, could make the MET cost range from 3 to 12. Try to get some indication of how hard they are working at a particular task.
10. NOTE: Please be certain to review the accompanying Physical Activity Log with all participants so that they can use this to prepare for filling out the Physical Activity Questionnaire.

Activity List

Moderate Activities (similar to brisk walking)

Occupational Tasks:

1. Delivering mail or patrolling on foot
2. House painting
3. Truck driving (making deliveries-lifting and carrying light objects)

Household Activities:

1. Raking the lawn
2. Sweeping and mopping
3. Mowing the lawn with a power mower
4. Cleaning windows

Sports Activities (actual playing time):

1. Volleyball
2. Ping Pong
3. Brisk walking for pleasure or to work (3 mph or 20 min/mile)
4. Golf-walking and pulling or carrying clubs
5. Calisthenics exercise

Hard Activities (between brisk walking and jogging /running)

Occupational Tasks:

1. Heavy carpentry
2. Construction work-doing physical labor

Household Activities:

1. Scrubbing floors
2. Shoveling snow

Sports, Activities (actual playing time):

1. Doubles tennis
2. Disco, Square, or Folk dancing

Very Hard Activities (similar to jogging/running)

Occupational Task:

1. Very hard physical labor-digging or chopping with heavy tools
2. Carrying heavy loads, such as bricks or lumber

Sports Activities (actual playing time):

1. Jogging or swimming
2. Singles tennis
3. Racquetball
4. Soccer

General Coding Instructions

- 1) Use correct version of form. The correct version will always be on the file server.
- 2) Use either black or blue pen on all forms, not pencil.

- 3) Make sure that there is either a legible name or correct ID # or both, if needed, on each page of a form. It is strongly suggested that you use a printed label for ID numbers.
- 4) Make sure each question is answered. Be sure to resolve any questions before the respondent leaves and before entering data.
- 5) Check each question for ambiguous answers. Be sure to resolve these before the respondent leaves and before entering data.
- 6) Do not obliterate or erase any entry of the respondent.
- 7) All corrections are made by first making a slash through the incorrect entry and writing the correct entry next to it. Then, alongside the corrected entry, write your initials, the date of the correction and a note about why the correction was made (e.g., RL, 7/30/97, incorrect ID).
- 8) Flag any questions you are not sure of and give them to the clinic coordinator or dietitian for review.
- 9) Check all lead-in questions for correct skip patterns.
- 10) When filling out the "Reviewed by" and "Entered by" box, be sure to use the correct staff ID number. The "Entered by" staff ID # should not be written until the form is entered.

Physical Activity Questionnaire

Visit and participant identification data:

ID # should have five alpha characters and five numerical digits. The alpha characters can be replaced by asterisks if there are not enough characters in the participant's name (e.g. ABCD*12345)

1. The response to Question 1 must be between 0 and 7. Homemakers, retired persons and people not working should be coded as a 0. If a 0 is coded for question 1, questions 2, 4, 6 and 8 should also be coded a 0.
2. Question 2 must reflect the average hours of nightly sleep per worknight. Record to the nearest quarter of an hour (i.e. 07.25). If the participant does not work outside the home, this should be coded a 0.
3. Question 3 must reflect the average hours of nightly sleep each night before their days off. Record to the nearest quarter of an hour (i.e. 07.25). If the participant does not work outside the home, this must reflect the average hours of nightly sleep.
4. Enter to the nearest half of an hour. If the participant does not work outside the home, this should be coded a 0.
5. Enter to the nearest half of an hour.
6. Enter to the nearest half of an hour. If the participant does not work outside the home, this should be coded a 0.
7. Enter to the nearest half of an hour.
8. Enter to the nearest half of an hour. If the participant does not work outside the home, this should be coded a 0.

9. Enter to the nearest half of an hour .
10. Do not leave blank. Answer must be between 1 and 5.
11. Do not leave blank. Answer must be between 1 and 5.
12. Do not leave blank. Answer must be between 1 and 3.